Executive Summary

Caseload Management (Page 9)

PD uses the Client Records Management System (CRMS) to manage cases and assign attorney caseload. The caseload data available from CRMS is inaccurate, due primarily to time delays from information received from Superior Court. In addition, the data available from the system does not provide sufficient detail to effectively assign cases. PD is aware of the system's deficiencies and has begun to take the necessary steps to address the problems noted. The office should continue with the corrective actions currently in progress.

Office Operations (Page 11)

PD effectively manages its administrative functions and operations, including payroll processing, grant funding, fixed asset tracking, employee travel and training expenses, and transcription expenses. However, we found internal controls could be strengthened in the areas of payroll reconciliation, fixed asset tracking, and expense processing. PD should enhance procedures in these areas to improve internal controls and better safeguard County resources.

Trust Fund Administration (Page 13)

PD maintains a trust fund account that is administered on behalf of clients for expenses such as expert witness fees. Rules for administering client trust funds state that trust fund monies are to be maintained separately from personal or departmental monies. Unclaimed monies, which cannot be returned to the rightful owners, should be escheated to the state after five years. We found non-trust fund transactions that had been processed through the account and that the current balance includes unclaimed funds over five years old. PD should take actions necessary to ensure that the fund is used for its intended purpose and complies with the requirements set forth by the ARS and Arizona Rules of Court.

Attorney Licenses (Page 15)

Attorneys hired by the PD office report their status as members of the State Bar of Arizona (Bar) at the time of hire. The PD office relies on Bar determinations when verifying attorneys' reported information relating to licenses, misconduct charges, and sanctions. This information is reviewed annually in conjunction with attorney license renewals and Bar dues payments. PD procedures appear to be adequate to ensure compliance with attorney license requirements, as stipulated by the Bar and the courts.

Program Change Controls (Page 16)

PD has not developed a formal process to ensure that all program changes are properly authorized, tested, and approved by the requestor. Also, the programmer making a change is responsible for moving the change into production. This same person has database administrator responsibilities, which according to best practices, should be performed by a different individual. This security risk is compounded by a lack of staff backup, which could negatively impact service continuity. These control weaknesses increase the risk that improper program changes could be implemented. PD should adopt a formal program change control process, ensure that critical information technology job duties are properly segregated, and establish backup for key technology positions.

User Access Controls (Page 18)

User access to the PD's Client Records Management System appears to be adequately restricted based on current job responsibilities. The PD also has a security policy that covers confidentiality of data, as well as, provides adequate protection and composition of passwords.

Disaster Recovery Planning (Page 19)

The PD does not have a documented and tested disaster recovery plan to recover its systems in the event of a disaster or extended system outage due to hardware or software problems. In addition, system backup tapes were not rotated off-site when we began our audit. However, action was taken to correct this situation during the audit. The PD does not have assurance that it can recover its systems timely to prevent potential business interruptions. The PD should develop and document a disaster recovery plan and test the plan at least annually.